

Turkey (as Bomb)

Beele
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**Determining "Who Done It":
The Forensic Investigations of
Iraqi Terrorist Operations
During the Gulf War** ☐

Forensic investigations of terrorist operations during the Gulf war combined criminal investigative techniques and scientific analysis to determine that Baghdad was responsible for at least three attempted attacks against US interests. Similarities uncovered—including the construction of the devices and the type of explosives used—revealed Iraqi involvement in thwarted terrorist operations in the Philippines, Indonesia, and Turkey. ☐

Close Calls in the Philippines, Indonesia, and Turkey
The forensics investigation at the crime scene in Manila provided important clues to the size and composition of the powerful bomb that exploded prematurely near a USIS facility on 19 January, killing one Iraqi terrorist involved:

- Analysis of the resulting crater—3 feet wide and 1 foot deep, ☐—and residue collected by investigators indicated that 15 pounds of an RDX-based explosive were used.
 - The sheared, jagged edges of the fragments uncovered indicated high-explosive damage, further substantiating that plastic explosives, such as RDX, probably were used.
 - Witnesses reported that the device exploded after the pair carrying the bomb stopped about 90 meters away from the USIS facility, and one of the terrorists put his hand in the sack containing the device.
- ☐

The crime scene investigation in Indonesia pointed to a device similar to the one used in the aborted Manila attack. The bomb found at the US Ambassador's

Postblast Forensic Investigations

Investigators of terrorist bombings, like the one in Manila, gather as much evidence as possible at the crime scenes before exposure to the elements and cleanup efforts taint the area. Fragments of material—especially remains of the improvised explosive device (IED)—are distinguished from the surrounding debris in the hope of using them to reconstruct the bomb. Investigators must take care to avoid boobytrap devices often planted at the crime scene to sabotage the investigation and to strike at security forces. ☐

The evidence is then sent to the laboratory, where every piece is inventoried and tested. Recovered fragments, explosive devices, and other items are listed and photographed for use in subsequent investigations. The evidence usually then undergoes forensic testing. Depending on the nature of the evidence, tests might include metallurgy, fingerprints, hairs and fibers, document examination, and blood and DNA analysis. ☐

Once the inventory and testing are completed, investigators attempt to reconstruct the device and identify the bomb maker. Characteristics noted in the construction of the device—☐

residence in Jakarta on 18 January was discovered before it detonated:

- The device contained 7 kilograms of PE-4A, an RDX-based plastic explosive. ☐

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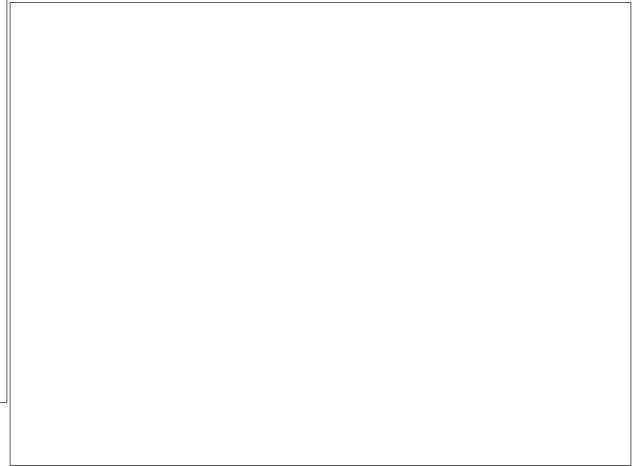
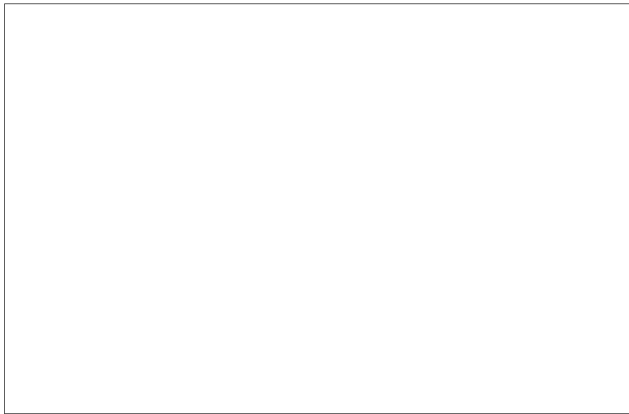
The incident in Turkey involved a Mercedes automobile that had been rigged as a car bomb. The driver, who was arrested while attempting to smuggle the bomb into Turkey on 15 February, admitted to Turkish authorities that he knew the car contained explosives and that he had planned to deliver it to an Iraqi in Istanbul:

- Preliminary reports estimate that 35 to 100 kilograms of a nonplastic high explosive were used, but lab reports on the type of explosive material are still pending.
- The sophisticated assembly of the device—including a concealed radio-controlled firing device and electric blasting cap to provide a backup detonation method—strongly suggested state support. ☐

Commonalities Point to Iraqi Involvement

Forensics investigators clearly implicated Baghdad in the botched terrorist attacks by comparing the evidence with known Iraqi devices and explosives. ☐

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**Iraqi "Signatures": An Indicator of Iraqi Involvement
in Future Terrorist Attacks**

The commonalities among the Iraqi devices uncovered
in the Philippines, Indonesia, and Turkey reveal an
Iraqi "signature" that will help to identify Iraqi
involvement in future terrorist operations.

